kohl zine
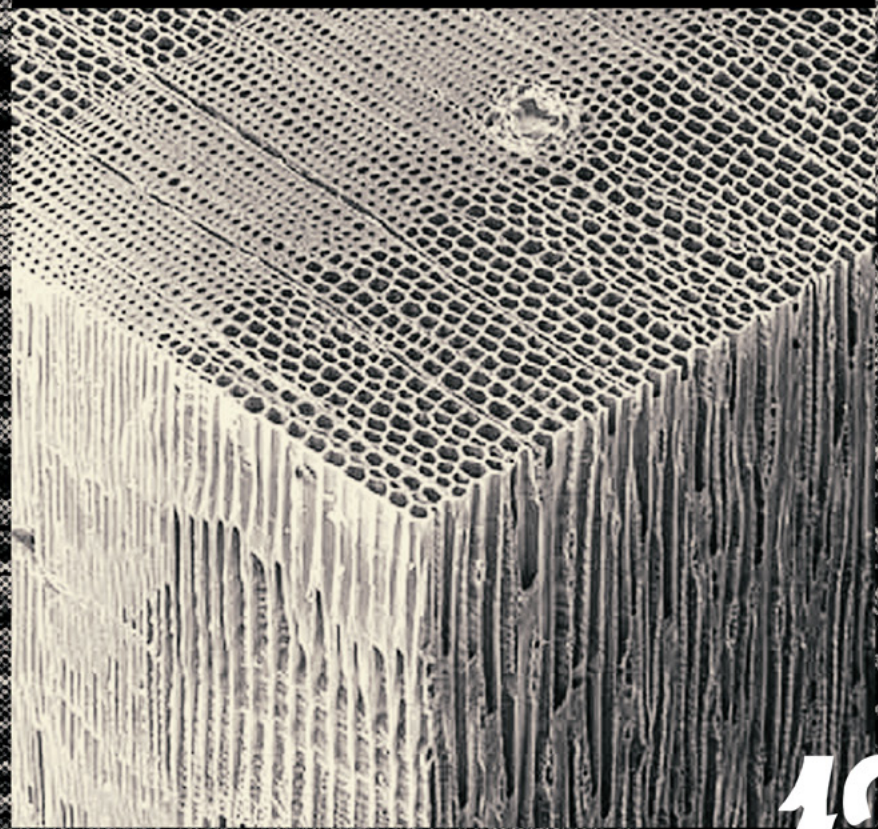
12

Krautchan - Roman empire
Ernstchan - Byzantine empire
Kohlchan - Ottoman empire

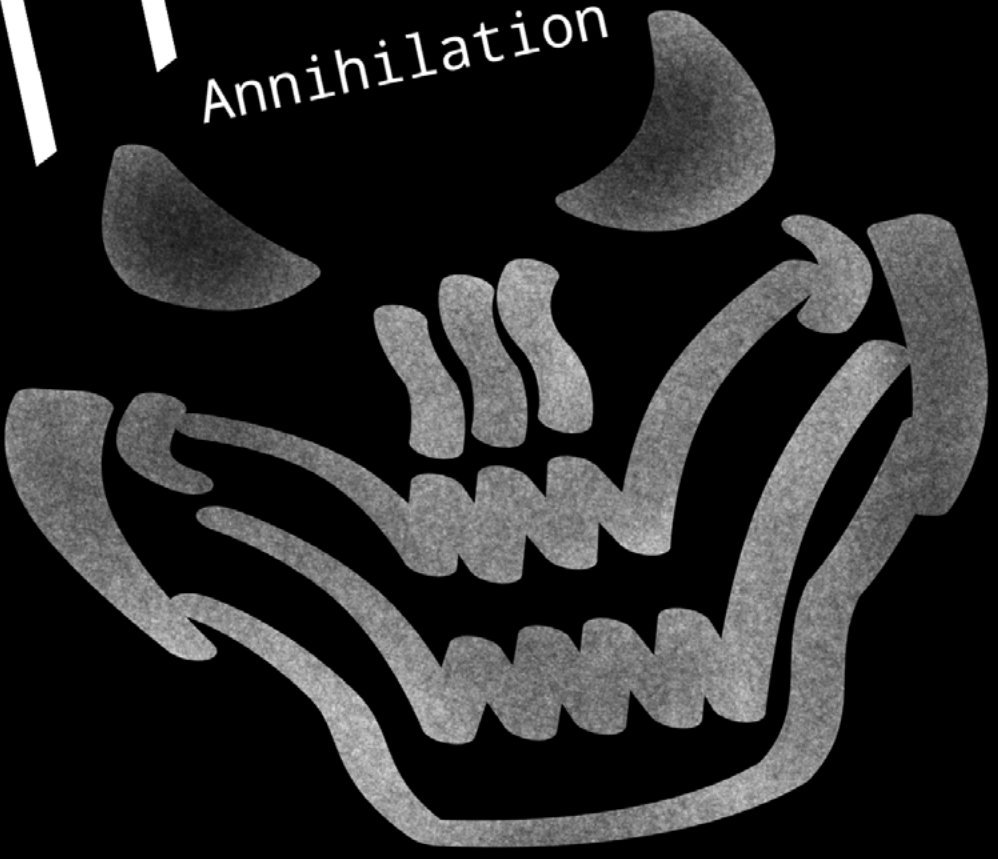# Octovember'19
Issue XII

PFFRT

Annihilation
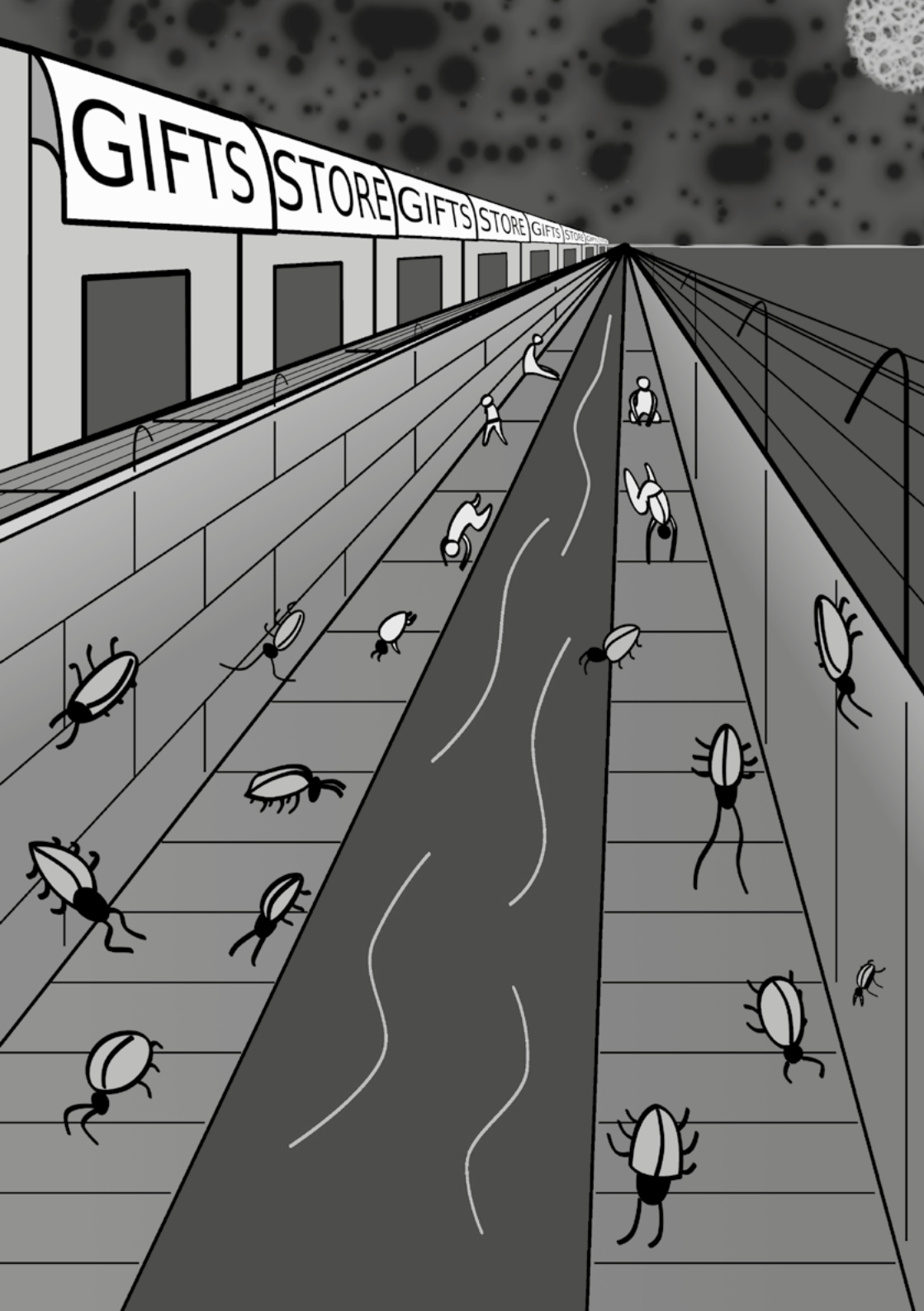
Imagine the smell

The Circus

Everything you see on a major news channel or newspaper is part of something actually called the Circus by those in charge of running it. It also includes the movie and music industries as well as the video game industry to a lesser extent. Its goal is to distract and divert masses away from political power. Why do I need power, you might ask. We all need political power backing us. If not another group will be backed and secure it for themselves. So the best way of retaining it is to divert and distract potential contestants away from this goal. The news, movie and music provide something called narrative. Pretty much like the Genesis, it explains to the crowd where it should stand with regards to the person in charge, and to be afraid. Add to this the standardization of the workweek, and there's almost no-one left able to look for political power. Every now and then someone does something unexpected, people die, mental health is blamed. When in fact those responsible for the situation are the guys holding political power to themselves and not sharing it. But of course they'll never let go. Some political organizations going against them were even outlawed, that pretty much says it all. Where do we go from here then? Under-represented, doomed to stay that way. Birth rates dwindle, suicides become more frequent. But the Circus is here to brighten the day. With nice pictures and songs and videos, it feels nice and comfortable. People felt safe on the boat as long as the music played. For us it's as long as the Circus plays. The Circus. If you can get rid of it then people will get moving.

S T O P W A T C H I N G T H E C I R C U S

Travel Column (For travel haters)

by Britball

There's few things you lot hate more than traveling and those conspicuous consumers that do it. In that I differ from you, so I have taken it upon myself to write a travel column for those who hate travel. Yes, on my tablet.

Pimlico Spice, reasonably priced and available for take-away, tells us they serve Bangladeshi food, but really they offer the Indian kitchen that every Briton is familiar with. And they served the same food seven years ago when I visited; the same chicken Tikka masala, and the mango chutney still comes in the same bowls, paired with the same raita, pickles and onion salad you didn't order but get billed for anyways. The only difference I remember is being alone this time and not ordering four naans (four naans? That's insane!) but two poppadums instead.

Familiarity is comforting because it distracts us from decay, but the seven year hiatus between my visits made the decay to the upholstery quite noticeable. Those with a bolder sense of aesthetics abhor familiarity in favour of decay, finding the latter exciting. The peels of paint were not very exhilarating and even a full-blown hole in the seat certainly didn't trigger me to get my camera out, but decay can be thrilling. It can be worth a trip even, or at least a detour. That's two to three stars' worth of excitement according to the Michelin guide.

Why does decay excite (some of) us? Because it visualises a power much greater than us; entropy, and thus makes the sublime appear. It's the opposite of comforting or familiar, it strikes with excitement and thrills when it hits you, just like a mighty storm, the vastness of space or the holiness of a grand cathedral might.

London doesn't offer much else in the way of decay besides Spice's paint peels. The value of the land that the crown so generously leases to its subjects is too high for that. The one old industrial building that was beautifully rotting away in the city's heart, Battersea power station, has been neatly given a ghastly glass shell and has been filled to the brim with a cocktail of mocha lattes, designer industrial furniture, rainbow flags and Apple employees.

No, for a good dose of decay, head up north to Birmingham. This city is a beautiful museum on the death of the British empire. Skip the modern centre, forget the bull ring. Go down to the canals that once we're the veins pumping imperial splendour through Britannia and keep walking past the picture-perfect canal boats and beyond the flowers hanging from the walls of middle-class restaurants. Don't be afraid of the dark of the tunnels.

Don't be afraid but do be wary. In fact if you know some fringe types, see if they can supply you with a bicycle wheel for self defence, for these tunnels crawl with the downtrodden and the barely-living, their arms full of punctures and their eyes full of emptiness. You'll find not only the ruins of a once-industrious city here, but many archaeological layers of giving up. Windows have been turned to brick and mortar when various anti-theft devices, still present in front of the now blind walls, failed. Every reachable surface has been covered in the illegible markings of the misguided youth, and every inaccessible place has been reclaimed by shrubbery.

Of course we cannot end on such a melancholic note. So in David Attenborough's voice, "but even here, life prevails!" Not only did I find a tent down under the ground; some enduring creature had made this Hades his home. But the water locks that allow you to lift or lower your canal boat still work and are ever so well maintained! So come to Birmingham, rent a canal barge and sail on down the river Styx in the bowels of the city, whilst having a cuppa! That, and two pound for a pint at Subside bar on Wednesdays, you don't have that in London either.

A Tale of Two Cities

Traditions are answers that have been discovered to enduring questions

Sir Roger Scruton

by Germanball

This is a tale of two cities. No, of a myriad cities. It is a tale of almost every city on the globe and yet it is a tale of only one. It is the tale of the destruction of this city and therefore of the destruction of every city. It is a fictional story and yet it is brutally real.

I tell the story of how the settlements of earth have been ravaged without remorse or regard for their inhabitants - but within this story there also lies the key of how they can be healed again.

To begin this tale, I want to take you on a trip through time and space. Imagine, for a moment, a city. It might be one you know, or it might be one that does not exist. The only important thing is, that in the end you feel comfortable in it.

Begin with the street beneath your feet. Let it take shape in your mind. How does it look? Is it straight, or maybe curved? Are there trees lining the sides? What material is the pavement made of? Is it busy or tranquil or maybe something in between? When you are done, continue with the buildings. How many are there, how tall? How do they look? Are they majestic, or do they remain functional? Is the street lined with shops or are there only the entrances to the houses? What about everything else? Are there parks or monuments? How do the inhabitants look like? Are they hushed and quiet or loud and full of life?

This is the first city. Take some time to imagine it.

When you're done, take a stroll in it. Look at the urban-scape you have created in your mind, marvel at its details. Absorb the scents and tastes and lose yourself in the near infinite layers of its sounds. Go from place to place or skip between scenarios. Your thoughts are the only place where you are truly free.

Do this for as long as you desire.

Great. I'm glad you're back. Now, how does your city look like? How does it feel? Chances are, it is not a place that has - or would have - been built today. Chances are, it looks not like the place you currently reside in. And I don't mean your city of residence - if you do live in a city. I mean your house, your block, your neighbourhood. This is the second city.

Am I right? Lucky me if I was. But even if I was not, keep reading. There is something to be learnt.

What do I mean, when I say "it is not a place that has been built today"? The explanation is simple: We once knew the art of how to build cities but now have long forgot. Or not forgot - but rather cast aside with all our might and then willfully buried it. But the instinct lives on in every one of us. We discarded our rules and intuition which were refined through millennia of uninterrupted iteration, and replaced them with the brutish reality of numbers and logic. We did so, because we wanted to give humanity a new, better and freer way of living their lives. That is what we thought, anyways. In reality, this new paradigm has wreaked havoc on our living spaces and destroyed them on a more fundamental level than any warlord could ever hope to do. This has not been an isolated accident, but rather a deliberately designed plague which has spread to even the most remote corners of the globe.

And at the core of it all lies one innocent invention.

I want you to return to the first city. The city you crafted in your mind. Compare it to the place you currently live in. What is the most striking difference? Maybe your city is cleaner, maybe safer. Has it more beauty or is there simply more to do? Truth be told, the answers will be as numerous as the people answering. But there might be something else, something you can't quite put your hand on. Now we are cutting to the heart of it.

The tale of modern cities is a tale of conflict. Everything in a city is competing for limited resources. Over money, over people, but, above everything else, over space. Shall we build offices here or housing? But we also need a new school - and if we build something at all we need parking. What about parks and recreation? Shopping? How will people get here and how will they leave? So much to build but so little space.

This competition is natural and not necessarily a bad thing. It lies in the very nature of a city and it forces us to constantly reflect on how we live and on how we want to live. If we do this, a city will be able to grow in a healthy, organic and satisfying way. And while this has worked for thousands of years, something, somewhen clearly went awry.

It is the year 1913 in Detroit, Michigan. A cold wind howls through the hall. Men stand in silence around a vast machine, tension on their faces.

A button is pushed or a lever pulled. For a second, nothing. Then a rumble and a clank. The contraption slowly begins to move. Jerky at first, then steading while picking up speed. A cheer goes through the crowd, workers and engineers congratulate each other. Some turn to the conveyor to begin their labour with relieved determination. They know, that in this moment the world has been changed forever.

After years of hard work, Henry Ford had finally unveiled the worlds first moving assembly line, eventually cutting down the time needed to build an automobile from 12 hours to just 93 minutes. With this, he lay the foundation for modern mass production. In 1913, there were six hundred thousand cars globally. By 1925, Ford had produced 15 million Model T cars alone. Not only did he push the automobile into the mainstream with his revolutionary manufacturing methods, he also ushered in a new era of wealth and consumerism which has retrospectly been coined with the handy term of "Fordism". Due to the invention of Henry Ford, vast swaths of the population could afford luxury commodities for the first time in history. And the commodity of the age was the car - with far reaching consequences.

Let's dive even further into history. In Europe, large scale remodeling or even the creation of entirely new cities has been accepted practice since before the Age of Enlightenment. The German city of Karlsruhe for example - today home to over three hundred thousand inhabitants - began construction in 1715 and was entirely planned on the drawing board to serve as a residence for Badens royalty. Similarly - in his endeavour to modernize Russia - Peter the Great began the construction of St. Petersburg in 1703 to gift to the country a new capital.

A famous example for the rebuilding of an entire city on the other hand was the renovation of Paris directed by the french city planner Georges-Eugène Haussmann. In 1853, the freshly self-crowned Emperor Napoleon III. instructed him to open up the still mostly medieval Parisian quarters which had become an overpopulated breeding ground for unrest and disease. The massive undertaking - which warrants its own article - was not finished until 1927, when the aptly named Boulevard Haussmann was finally completed. In this 73 year time span Paris was turned completely upside down. Taking inspiration from London, the city was extend-

ed and doubled in size and the claustrophobic alleys made way for the extensive network of Boulevards we still know and love. Old buildings were replaced with monumental squares and dreamy parks. New railways were introduced and the population was given ample new opportunities for leisure, such as opera houses or a new Louvre wing. Add to that the rework of the sewage system and it is easy to understand, why at one point a third of the cities population worked in fields related to the construction sector.

But while these renovations created much of the iconic architecture that is still being cherished today, the project was not without opposition. Even though Haussmann rec- reated the city with beauty in mind and to the benefit of all, critical voices attacked his indiscriminate demolition of medieval structures, lamenting that the individual charme of the city would forever be lost. Such arguments are still brought into play today, when another devel- opment sets out to substitute another valuable piece of history with just another overpriced temple of commerce. This doesn't mean the argument is wrong - neither today nor 150 years ago. It must always be carefully consid- ered whether it is both beneficial and desirable to take such measures. In the case of Paris, the answer to both questions would be a resounding yes. Not only did the new city greatly reduce the spreading of diseases while generally increasing the quality of living - it also replaced the old with something of equal or even superior beauty. To summarize it: The renovation of Paris served its people.

Fast forward a few decades. We are now in the year 1933. Aboard a cruise ship sailing the mediterranean from Athens to Marseille, the recently naturalized French citizen Charles-Édouard Jeanneret is in deep dis- cussion with a dedicated group of fellow experts who are all eager to present the findings of their studies.

HABITER

TRAVAILLER

CIRCULER

They have spent the last three years analyzing, contemplating and planning. The 4th International Congress of Modern Architecture or Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne (CIAM) was originally planned to take place in Russia but had to be relocated due to the difficult political climate. The congress was held under the theme of "The Functional City" and sought to explore urbanscapes finely sorted along functional lines. Where the city of the past was an organic entity and a cramped place of deeply intermingled uses, the city of the future should be meticulously planned and neatly divided by use function. A neighborhood for living, a neighborhood for work, a neighborhood for the industry and so on. To properly conceptualize such a space, the collective had analyzed over 30 cities and was now looking at its findings. Under the supervision of Jeanneret - better known by his pseudonym Le Corbusier - the group started to debate about what their vision should look like. When they eventually arrived in Marseille, they had settled on a plan. It would, however, take ten more years for it to be published in occupied Paris

by Le Corbusier under the title of "Charter of Athens". The modernist manifesto presents a turning point and would have a profound impact after the Second World War.

The Charter of Athens itself is - much like the city it proposes - neatly divided and properly ordered. The final document contains 94 bullet points on five DIN A4 pages. Not all that much when you take its profound impact into account. The charter must be seen as a product of its time which seeks to address (the then) contemporary problems. European cities of that time were overcrowded and heavily polluted. Diseases were common, parks and recreation was rare and the commute could take hours - much of the same problems cities have been plagued by since ancient times. This time around though, the envisioned solutions were to be a lot more radical.

The document, riddled with spelling errors, calls for a radical reshaping of the urbanscape with the underlying goal of breaking up the city into dedicated living, working and industrial areas, all tied together by an extensive road network and plenty of green spaces for people to relax. Residential buildings should be spaced apart to allow for maximum sunlight and occupy only the most desirable regions of the city and everywhere resurfaces the idea of making this city feasible through private individual transport, or, to use a less sophisticated term, cars.

However, for all the impact it might have had, the charter remains little more than a vaguely sketched out declaration of intent instead of a well thought out grand plan. To get the full picture, we must delve beyond its ambiguous demands and deeper into the minds of its creators...

...With which we will continue in the next part of this article. Stay tuned, stay focused and remember to save Europe, kids. Fuck instant gratification.

Ghost of Yugoslavia: Road to Turbo-folk

by Poleball

It is said that music, or art in general, has an extraordinary power of connecting people; Arabic nasheeds accompanying Daesh propaganda found "ironic" recognition among DEUS VULT'ers, Red Army Choir conquered the hearts of zealous anti-communists, Erika fans exist beyond the Wehraboo circle-jerks and so on, and so on, examples can be multiplied to infinity. The same is true for Turbo-folk, which despite it's associations with Serbian nationalism, has became a common guilty pleasure for all citizens of former Yugoslav republics - one glimpse at songs currently popular on Balkans shows same exact top songs, and despite the years of exposure to Western rock and rap the genre that reigns supreme in still turbo-folk.

Let's start with deciphering the name itself; turbo-folk is a paradoxical mix of old and new; speed, exaggeration associated with modernity and globalization, and the traditional folk element, modern form with old content. The term itself was coined by Montenegrin artist and parodist Rambo Amadeus but no artist ever admitted to unironically perform it, as the music of this genre was associated with bad taste. For Croats and Slovenians, turbo-folk was the "Serbian" music and they also considered it a stranger. Serbs on the other hand claimed that they turbo-folk isn't their music but something more oriental, Turkish or Arab. The stigma has accompanied this music genre from the very beginning. Why? How exactly was turbo-folk born?

Balkans due to their geography and history, were a cross-road of cultures and religions, this strategic position didn't bring prosperity to the region though, due to its borderland nature and constant skirmishes territories of future ex-Yugoslavia remained devastated, isolated and relatively little civilized, with one of the highest illiteracy rates in Europe. Because of this, or perhaps thanks to this, oral culture survived here for a very long time unaffected. Epic songs of Bosnian Serbs were studied by early XX century classicists seeking evidence that the Iliad could be remembered in its entirety by a single person. When Tito united this land and urbanization began, thousands of peasants went to the cities looking for happiness and work. On the outskirts of growing cities, in the local taverns, so-called kafanas, the music of peasants-workers started to evolve, reaching for new themes and instruments. An example of song with modern thematic but still pretty much submerged in traditional forms is Smrt u Dallasu (Death in Dallas)[*] , by Croatian gusle player Jozo Karamatic, ballad about the assassination of Kennedy which starts like that:

> *my gusle, old instrument*
>
> *modernity won't hurt you,*
>
> *because a guslar fine tune*
>
> *has become our tradition*
>
> *i will sing the song now*
>
> *about the assassination therein*
>
> *in which President Kennedy falls*

[*] https://youtu.be/vzpbZVP-T8c

This music was not appreciated by the intelligentsia, it was too coarse, repetitive and ritualistic, it needed to be purified so as not to irritate the tastes of the new urban intellectual elites. Yugoslavian state media were given a mission to produce TRVE Yugoslav folk music. Traditional songs were selected by special committees of musicologists and apparatchiks, then academically trained radio producers took care of the "correct" arrangements. This process was obviously very limiting both for musicians (who, by the way, remained anonymous, as they were only performers, not composers) and listeners thirsty for new songs. Music that was born out of it was called "izvorna" ("from the source") and considered authentic, despite being obviously tailored to petit-bourgeoise tastes. This process happened in countries of the Warsaw Pact also, where regional dance and music groups had been established with a selection of songs most palatable for modern ear.

But there was one problem, people didn't really want to listen to it. Normally it shouldn't be issue in a communist country but Yugoslavian record companies, in contrast to radio and television, did not receive state funding. Despite that they were burdened with the mission of producing and distributing "izvorna" music that was not sold in dizzying quantities. There was a need for some new product to help companies keep going - finally in the mid 1960s composers and performers managed to convince the authorities to expand the kosher radio repertoire and create a new category of "Newly Composed Folk Music".

National popular music in Yugoslavia in the 1960s was in a strange position. On the one hand, national aesthetics and folk art were an important export product of the country and a source of valuable foreign currencies for

the country, on the other hand, they contrasted with the image that the country was trying to sell: as a liberal, socially progressive state. Yugoslavia wanted to convince Wect that it isn't reactionary and dark place like Stalin's USSR by support of modern abstract painting and sculpture and very liberal approach to nudity in television and cinema. In order to limit the spread of the NCFM, the presence of western music in national radio stations was increased. Paradoxically despite the opposition of the authorities, the NCFM, by linking the musical idioms of the various peoples of Yugoslavia and talking about the problems of modernization, pursued successfully what the state propaganda clumsily tried to: creation of the cultural points of reference understood by all the peoples of the country and assisting its inhabitants in the violent socio-economical changes.

Despite efforts at modernisation the country was still very rural and NCFM singers have became champions of the rural population. Regional talent smitheries such as music festivals or the local labels often had a better chance of creating stars than the national radio stations. Lepa Lukić, the first big Yugoslav star (her debut single[*] sold 260,00 copies in 1965) started her career as a singer in kafanas and maintained an image of simple village girl, establishing common archetype for the female singers in this genre. Miroslav Ilić, was another genre defining artist in the same period , he achieved great success despite being rejected by major producers and his "I prefer girl from the city" is considered a model NCFM song[**]. While nominaly "folk" the artists gradually introduced melodies inspired by Wectern genres like German *schlagers,* as well as Greek and eastern music.

* https://youtu.be/a7QmhQW2lAM
** https://youtu.be/MA3wx-ZeMXs

The authorities and the enlightened urban elites saw the NCFM primarily as a degeneration of "authentic" folk music and tried to counteract the explosion of its popularity using mass media and sometimes even the law. Series of moral panics erupted in which NCFM and his successor turbo-folk were put in a similar position as satanic heavy metal in the West. It all started the discussion around the so-called Kitsch tax (officially "Law about Changes and Amendments to Republic Tax on Small Goods and Services"), an attempt to control and limit the development of popular media and at the same time to capitalise on them. All products specified as kitschy, i.e. the majority of popular culture, especially NCFM, but also pulp, and comics (there were eve public burnings of them) were subject to 31.5% tax in 1972.

The term "newly composed" itself became an ironic epithet meaning kitschy, provisional, without history, newly composed politicians, heroes, states started to populate the Yugoslavian common speech.

While controversial tax didn't survive the 80s, first wave of moral panic created aftershocks in 1995 during a Year of Culture when Milosevic's government tried to supress the turbo-folk music as degenerate and again in 2010, when Serbian party DSS had proposed a "programme of cultural rebirth", suggesting a return to Kitsch tax.

Neither of those attempts worked - by the mid 1980s, NCFM accounted for 58% of the musical production of the whole Yugoslavia. While the majority of the performers came from Serbia, Bosnia and Macedonia, i.e. the underdeveloped eastern regions. Croats and Slovenians were equally involved in the production, Slovenia alone producing 20% of it.

The next stage of development took place in the 1980s, after Tito's death. Filling the void after the lost leader, a new star appeared - Lepa Brena, Bosnian of origin but singing serbian ekavian dialect, one could see her as Yugoslovian every-woman a true success story multicultural society free of hate. Her image, full of eroticism and a glamorous wealth, contrasted with the rapidly deteriorating living conditions in country striken by global financial crisis and lack of foreign aid that used to rain on it during Tito years. Her career was a swan song of the Yugoslavian nation. It reached climax with her great hit "Jugoslovenka"* (Yugo-girl) in 1989, sang together with a Bosniak, Croat and Montenigger male singers while ethnic tensions began to destabilize the state. 3 years later state where they were all born ceased to exist. When the time had came to choose the camps. instead of a symbol of the unity of nation, her mixed Serbian and Bosnian identity became problematic - the Bosnians considered her to be an apostate and traitor, and insinuated that she embraced Orthodoxy and changed name.

At the same time, the group Južni Vetar celebrated their great successes. Consisting of Bosniak, Gypsy and Serbian, instrumentalists (accordion/keyboard, guitar and electronic bass) who recorded together with individual

* https://youtu.be/gsKn5KX6XnU

singers, the most popular being Dragana Mirkovic[*]. Their music, which combined Eastern Balkan melodies with modern recording techniques and electronic effects, and Roland Juno-60 effectively shaped the new aesthetics and paved the way for proper Turbo-folk. Their music proved to be too subversive for the ears of the apparatchiks who tried to ban them from national radio. Official media and local commentators tried to demonize the band by denouncing their Turkish-Arab nature and even calling their style "Khomeini's music". Musicians turned to regional radio stations and concerts in local festivals, they didn't need support of the state - audience was already there, starved for music they wanted to give them.

Initially, NCFM texts concerned themselves with traditional subjects of love, loneliness, adding to that stories about the work of gastarbeiters in Germany or Scandinavia. Over time, however, lyrics have evolved from traditional and universal into personal stories of individual success. The desire for authenticity of the performer replaced old desire for "authentic tradition". Yugoslav communism was dying, and the lyrics reflected the change in the values. This is when, at the end of the 80s, turbo-folk was born, and it's brightest star was without doubt Queen Ceca. I will tell you more about her in following article because wartime Balkan music deserves more detailed description.

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* https://youtu.be/xTvy6znWRJQ

Pissbottles

When Bernd was a preteen, his main hobby was watching late night television. He would watch mainly comedy shows except when a certain private TV station showed hentai on rare occassions. Since he didn't want to risk discovery by his mother that he's staying up late, he had to think of a way to deal with the call of nature. The most obvious solution to that were plastic bottles. There's lots of types of bottles with different pros and cons: „NesTea" bottles for example have a wider opening, allowing to fully enter it, reducing the risk of missing. Coloured bottles conceal it's content and cough ointment containers are too small, but fun to piss in.

Bernd hid the bottles under his bed and emptied them into the toilet whenever he had the chance, except sometimes he didn't. This led the content of the bottles to turn into a yellowish-black mush which smelled horrendously after opening. Sometimes Bernd threw random stuff like batteries into the bottles to satisfy his scientific curiosity.

Other times bottles simply weren't available and then the football trophy he won once had to serve as a piss container. His room reeked of urine and when for some mad reason he decided to empty the bottles (including the piss soaked batteries) out of the window of the commieblock he's living in, his neigbour below him complained to his mother who had to go pick up said batteries. His mother scolded him, but Bernd went on. The comfort a pissbottle provided simply was too tempting. He also still emptied the urine out of the window sometimes, but without batteries and only on rainy nights like the stealth pro he is.

When Bernd got old enough to stay up late, he grew out of his „hobby" and prefered to piss in the bathroom sink instead, as it provides an ideal height for a grown man to release his primal needs.

Cooking with Bernd

by Finnball

Macaroni casserole is a staple in finnish cuisine. Everyone remembers it from their childhood and probably still makes/eats it from time to time, be it jobless NEETs or an upper middle class housewife trying to feed her family. Here's the recipe:

- 400g ground beef/pork
- 5-6dl macaroni (regular or whole wheat)
- 1 big onion
- 5-7dl milk
- 3 eggs
- various spices for your meat, salt and pepper at least

1. Cook the macaroni in some water, you can skip this step but you'll have to adjust the amount of milk (around 1l if you add the macaroni raw)

2. Brown the meat with the chopped onion(s) and add spices to taste

3. Add the macaroni and meat/onion mixture together in your casserole dish

4. Mix the eggs in the milk and pour it in your dish, mix if needed

5. Cook in a 200°C/392°F oven for 1 hour until it gets a nice brown crusty layer on top (a lot of people consider this the best part of the dish)

6. Enjoy!

The Desert's Ship

Headstrong as a mule,
Steadfast as own feet,
Fat is his fuel,
Thorns are his meat.

Even hooves are commonplace,
Tougher trail than you can face,
Once they step, when they lift dust,
Long lost are prints of the past.

Scent that awes the steed and mare,
Hump to raise the spear and height,
Come chevalier and have your share,
This noble creature causes fright.

Sailing on the waves of arms,
Levanter blows the sails,
My ship suffers nill harms,
Turmoils or sand storms, all fierce as gales.

Beneficence

Do you wish, eternal life?
Or do you crave, eternal youth?
Do you dream of great renown?
Or vision hard and bitter truth?

Will you don immortal cloak?
Or doff an armour's suit?
Will you ask, to fly up high?
Or lie ,neath earth and root?

Will you dance, for all to cheer?
Or fall on weary limbs unbend?
Sing your hymn, stop their breath?
Or last home, your way wend?

Will you want your steed to bard?
Or laze in straw instead?
Will it pull a noble coach?
Or to it be fed?

Mage, follow in our steps!
See how scorn transform to praise!
We'll grant each wish, avowed,
For by our touch, ere dead we raise.

Lucidar für KC

Introduction to Lucidar and its Translation

by Croatball

1. Introduction and general history

Elucidarium , or *Elucidarius*, Latin for „the elucidator", „the enlightener", also recorded as *Lucidar* and *Lucidarij* in its Croatian redactions that we'll focus on, is a relatively short medieval text presenting various religious and (proto)scientific concepts and knowledge through the format of a dialogue between a student and a teacher (Latin „discipulus" and „magister"). Although the text is of very little practical importance to just about anyone living today, I decided to translate it into English because it offers a fascinating glimpse into the worldview of the medieval man. How is the world organised, how does natural phenomena occur, how was the world created, how does man's body work? All these, answered by medieval knowledge, myth, and doctrine, in a way radically foreign to us and our worldview, yet also a root of where we stand today as well.

There are two key moments in the formation of *Elucidarium*. The first instance of the text was composed in Latin by the theologian Honorius Augustodunensis in the early 12th century while he resided in England. This version is available in volume 172 of Patrologia Latina, pg. 1109-1176, under title *Elucidarium sive Dialogus de summa totius christianæ theologiæ* (Elucidator; or Dialogue on the totality of Christian theology). As the title suggests, this text was entirely dedicated to religious matters. The next important moment was a redaction by an unknown author, this time writing in German, near the end of the same century (around 1190-1195). This version substantially changed the text by reducing the theological content to accommodate many more „worldly", secular themes, such as natural phenomena, geography, astronomy, and biology, this time meant for a more general audience, such as acolytes, not only those well-versed in theology. *Elucidarium* proved to be massively popular in both versions, ending up recorded in hundreds of manuscripts and translations across Europe.

2. Analysis

The worldview of *Elucidarium* is distinctly medieval in many senses. The format of dialogue will likely seem reminiscent of Plato's philosophical dialogues, but this comparison immediately shows the difference between the two historical mindsets. Plato could represent different stances and dialectically oppose them, thus creating dialogue between them, giving them space for criticism of each other. (Mikhail Bakhtin [Бахтин] was especially fond of this process, giving Plato a special place in his history of the development of literary dialogism/polyphony; see especially the fourth chapter of his *Problems of Dostoyevsky's Poetics [Проблемы поэтики Достоевского]*.) On the other hand, *Elucidarium* is a dialogue only on the formal surface, as far as Bakhtin would be concerned - its

actual meaning is transmitted from the authority to the unlearned, and it is unquestionable and absolute truth. The student exists to ask for (not question) what the teacher knows with certainty. In many regards the teacher's answers will carry the authority similar to the presocratic mythos rather than being a product of critical or empirical examination of the reality. Rather than the modernmaterialist and positivist approach, the medieval man viewed the world as a series of signs left by God,the ultimate goal of our life and actions being God as well. This frequently leads to mysticist and mythical treatment of reality.
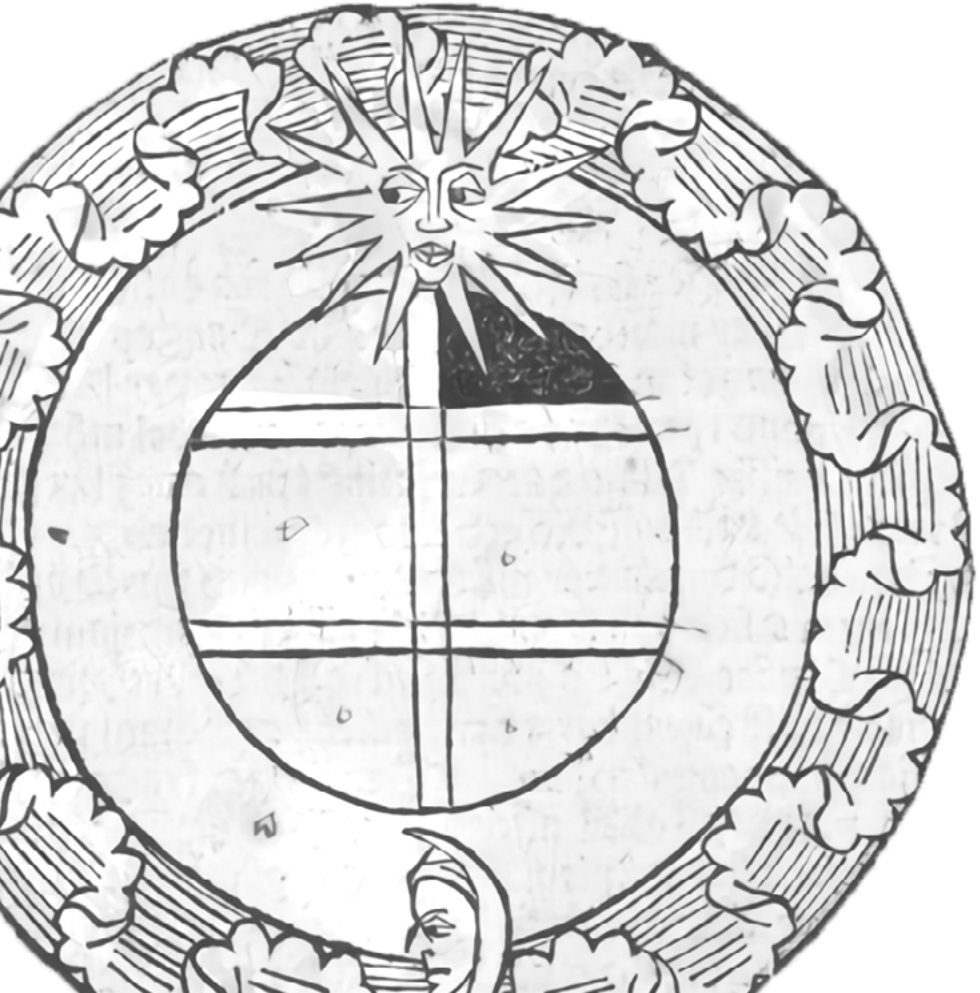
Croatian manuscripts

In Croatia there are three well preserved manuscripts of *Elucidarium*. (Fragments are listed in Kapetanović.) Two of them are, judging by their vocabulary, translated by anonymous scribes from a Czech text, which is based on the „secular" version. The third is translated from Italian by Gverin Tihić in 1533., with a shortened „theological" version as its basis. (Hercigonja 1975:419)

On translation

I decided to pick one single manuscript of the text - the Petris codex - that I've come across in my studies, which I'll attempt to transmit as truthfully as I can. That way, I'll avoid the question of what would be an ideal or "correct" version of the text,since every manuscript has its own peculiarities, mistakes, omissions, and additions (all this is completely natural for medieval literary transmission), which I'll attempt to replicate and explain according to the literature available to me. In translation I will attempt to retain the most literal meaning, since the purpose of the text is not artistic and its archaic language makes it difficult to discern legitimate stylistic choices from the potential more neutral style of expression (at least based

on my limited knowledge). That will result, perhaps, in replacing some turns of the phrase that I find very peculiar - but simply cannot tell if they're intended to be artificial or apart of the natural language at the time - with simpler, neutral and maximally direct formulations. This will result in a clear, though possibility dry reading. A certain number of mistakes will surely end up in the text,but I hope they won't significantly twist the general meaning. For what it's worth, the transcriptions of the manuscripts will be listed at the end, so anyone can check the original text for themselves.

LUCIDARIJ

*** signifies damaged text

Read the great wisdom of Lucidarij and come to understand.
God, who is and ever will be, will be an aid to our word/speech.
Amen. In these books, who will read or listen to them, to them
it is ??? as many a word is set??? How the youth asked his
master *** which are in these books, as it is on heaven and on
earth *** writes them and asks, and the Holy Spirit those ***
those teach us the real truth because in those books light is
spoken. And that which is in other books hidden, Lucidar has
shined light upon??? And so to them it is spoken as of a gem-
stone, because these books are worth more than gold. And who
reads them often and take them to mind, shall be very wise.

[1.] First asks the youth his master: How are we to believe in God?

The master says: We ought to believe in God how He is triple/threefold. And those three are the only and true diety.

[2.] The student says to his teacher: How can one be split into three?

The master says: In the Sun there are three words: light and warmth and beauty. And when of those three words there is one, there are all. And so is the Holy Trinity the only and true diety. Where the Father is, there is also the Son and the Holy Spirit; where the Son is, there is also the Father and the Holy Spirit; where the Holy Spirit is, there is also the Father and the Son.

[3.] How come those three can be split when the Son, being within the diety, came to the humanity ??? (prijel?)

When we see the sun ... ???položi??? because the Sun can never be split because it has great warmth and beauty and light. From those three words we have been given three gifts: the Father that has created us, the Son that gave us redemption/redempted us of our sins, and the Holy Spirit that has enlightened us. And so are those three in all holy deeds and have never been split.

[4.] You have spoken to me about the Creator, speak to me about the creation.

It is not good [to speak] about God immeasurably and deep so that the unlearned might not come into doubt when they hear the words which they cannot understand well. And because of that we have to believe in God well, that God has been and will be without an end and for all ages.

[5.] Was there God before the world?

He existed since time immemorial, and the creation of the (sego?) world was with Him always.

[6.] Why did God create the world then/at that moment/time?

In God there are three natures: power (might), wisdom and mercy. (note the alliteration) So He created the world to shows His nature: with power He created the sky, with His wisdom he set up/organised the world, with mercy He created the firm land/earth and made it firm.

[7.] How was it before the world was created?

There was nothing except for darkness and that darkness was called Hagos. And in that darkness there were three words.

[8.] Which were those 4 words?

First the fire, earth, water and air.

[9.] What did God create first? The sky and the land, then the angels and then all the creatures and then created man.

[10.] What was the name of the first angel?

His name was Lucifer. And God created that angel in great beauty. And being so beautiful he became haughty and desired to be an equal/contestant to God. And because of that he was dethroned/overthrown? from the heaven onto the earth and fell into hell.

[11.] For how long was Lucifer on the heaven?

For half an hour. nere?

[12.] Why did God create him so beautiful when He [decided to oust him so quickly]?

So that the angels which God chose to be in God's love be strenghtened and never fall out of God's grace/love.

[13.] When was hell created?

It was created when Lucifer thought of being an equal to God.

[14.] What is hell? Hell is on this/whole world, and before it there is fog and darkness and no man on this world can come there.

[15.] Does hell have a bottom?

Hell is narrow on the upper part, and on the inside it is so wide that nobody can observe it except God, who observes all.

[16.] How many names does Hell have?

The first name is lakas mortis, that is the Lake of Death, because in it souls swim as in water. The second name is stagna ignis, that is Lake of Fire, because souls burn in it. The third name is Forgotten Land, because those souls that enter Hell are not remembered by God ever again?. The fourth name is Great/Terrible Sorrow because here is crying of the eyes and gnashing of teeth and quaking life. The fifth name is jeona (Gehenna), that is Hellish Fire, and that fire is so hot that our fire compared to that fire is like a shadow??? compared to the Sun. The sixth name is Darkness, and that is endless dark. The seventh name is Unhappiness and there devils are moving here and there like lightnings/thunders or like sparks when blacksmiths are smithing???. The eighth name is Worm of Death, because as the worm eats? the dead body, so does Hell [devour souls]. The ninth name is River of Frost, that flows through Hell, smells of sulphur and of resin? and of asphalt. And it is so cold that all Hell ?????

[17.] What is the name of sky/heaven?

The sky is called firmamentum, and that means solid or ??? or the base because the sky was made so that it always flows towards the sunset, and the Moon flows upon it???

[18.] How is it so that the Moon and the sky are flowing?

Under the sky there is nothing upon which the sky could stand because it is round all around (naći bolji prijevod) like an egg and God created it that way. That's why it can't stand/stop on one place.

[19.] What is the sky made of?

The sky is made of four words and it is alike to green water. And learn that there are three skies besides the 7 other skies: from the Earth to the Moon is the first sky on which the Moon is, the second from the Moon to the stars, the third ?????, this is where God is seated.

[20.] Is there something in the sky?

From the Earth to the Moon there are evil spirits, that is zlovidomci (češ. zleho widomcy) / evil lookers???. And those are set there to disturb/do evil in our good deeds, and to pull us to evils down to them. Some of them go into clouds and into air when they wish to show themselves to us, and then they suffer in the clouds. And so they must do and suffer these pains until the Day of Judgement?. And from the Moon to the stars there are good angels and they are set to ????? us. And that sky is clear and they have a fiery form/face/appearance?.

[21.] Where was Adam created?

In the place which is called Ebron. And when he was created here, he was set into paradise. And here Adam gave a name to each thing God has created. And when Adam died, he was carried back to that place where he was created. And that place was filled with him of whom he was created???

[22.] And where was Eve created?

Eve was created in paradise out of Adam's rib.

[23.] Where is paradise?

Paradise is on the whole world (???? same phrase as for hell)

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(All three texts can be found in dizbi.hazu.hr database.)

Slovborgian Sound-Spelling Alphabet

by Sloveneball

The purpose of the Slovborgian Sound-Spelling Alphabet (SSS) is to provide a systematic way to transcribe any language in a consistent manner. The alphabet is designed so that the letters are assigned their expected values, with a consistent system of diacritics to modify basic sounds. However, exact manner of articulation is only vaguely represented.

The alphabet consists of letters taken mostly from Latin and Greek alphabets, supplemented with a couple extra letters. Usage of most is related to their use in existing phonetic alphabets (either IPA or Americanist phonetic notation and its derivatives). It should be fairly intuitive to learn.

Opposed to other phonetic alphabets, the SSS letters are designed with bicameral script in mind. Every letter has two shapes. That way, the SSS can be used with normal punctuation and doesn't stick out like a sore thumb in a text written in another language. This is possible because number of glyphs is already lowered by heavy use of diacritics (which will, however, not get too heavy in practice, as the SSS is a phonemic transcription, and not a precise phonetic alphabet).

The consonants

There are four fundamental active places of articulation: labial, coronal, dorsal, and guttural. Thus, for each type of sound we can distinguish four fundamental varieties, that can then be modified in nuance, both in active and the passive place of articulation. Only coronals can be passively labial or dorsal, and even that is very rare.

In addition to those four places of articulation, we also have a special class of sibilants; whose special hissing (or hushing) acoustics comes from secondary interaction of the airstream with the teeth.

In manner of articulation, we generally distinguish consonants by the degree of closure of airstream.

Among obstruents we can differentiate between plosives and fricatives, and by coarticulating both we produce affricates. Sibilants can't be plosives, and non-sibilant affricates are much rarer, so instead we distinguish between two classes, where the first is a plosive with non-sibilants and affricate with sibilants.

Among sonorants we have: nasals, where the oral cavity is fully closed like in a plosive, but are pronounced with a lowered velum allowing nasal escape; laterals, where the air is similarly allowed to escape on sides of the oral cavity; approximants, which are pronounced similar to fricatives but not with enough constriction to produce turbulence; and vibrants, which are either single taps or trills. We can view approximants as lax counterparts of fricatives, but can also be viewed as non-syllabic vowels; we can consider them as part of diphthongs as glides, but they also often occur in places of articulation not typical for vowels.

Consonants can be coarticulated; pure coarticulation will be notated with ligatures, but some secondary places of articulation warrant their own diacritics.

Voicing distinction is generally reserved for the obstruents. Voiceless consonants are produced without vibration in the vocal cords. Additional types of phonation are distinguished by diacriticals, and specific letters for voiced-voiceless pairs exist for obstruents only – voiceless sonorants take the diacritic for voicelessness instead.

The labials

The labials are:

The labial nasal:	M m
The labial voiceless plosive:	P p
The labial voiced plosive:	B b
The labial voiceless fricative:	F f
The labial voiced fricative:	V v
The labial vibrant:	Φ ɸ

Labial vibrants are rare, but do occasionally occur; generally they're paralinguistic and only occur in specific onomatopoieic words, or represent specific allophones. Nonetheless, we can choose a letter to transcribe them in the few cases the need arises: ‹Φ ɸ›. Note that this usage goes against IPA where [ɸ] is a bilabial approximant, instead transcribing this phoneme as [ʙ].

What about labial approximants? Vowel acoustics depend on position of the tongue, and with labials the tongue isn't involved. Instead, the bilabial approximant [β] somewhat corresponds to roundedness in vowels, but one that has no definite place of articulation. It is, however, generally not really rounded. The labiodental approximant [ʋ] can be taken as a laxer version of [v]

– and the two do indeed vary a lot in languages. Usually we'll write labial approximants with the letters for labial fricatives; where distinction is needed, we introduce diacritical marks. Thus, no glyph is warranted specifically for a labial approximant. Instead, we will write the approximant as lax ‹V̂ v̂›.

Labial plosives and nasals are typically bilabial, while the fricatives (and affricates) are more commonly labiodental. This arises from the fact that it's hard to make full constriction labiodentally, while frication is more distinct in the labiodental articulation than in the bilabial. In need of distinguishing the two, the labiodentals take the comma below (cedilla) diacritic; /ɸ/ will be written as ‹F f› while /f/ will be written as ‹F̦ f̦›.

The coronals

The coronals are:

The coronal nasal:	N n
The coronal voiceless plosive:	T t
The coronal voiced plosive:	D d
The coronal voiceless fricative:	Þ þ
The coronal voiced fricative:	Δ δ
The coronal approximant:	Ꞃ ꞃ
The coronal voiceless vibrant:	Ꝑ ꝑ
The coronal voiced vibrant:	R r

The laterals, which commonly occur in alveolar place of articulation, will be discussed separately.

For the coronal voiceless vibrant, which (like all voiceless sonorants) is a rare sound, we choose to base the letter on a variant of Greek letter rho: ‹Ꝑ ꝑ›. Uppercase letter is designed to have a similar shape as the lowercase.

The coronal approximant ‹ꞃ ꞃ› (written with a letter derived from the insular R, or Armenian re with the same phonemic value in classical Armenian) is commonly pronounced retroflex or postalveolar, which needs not be indicated explicitly. Instead, when such a sound is plain alveolar or dental, it will be marked with a comma below, as are dental sibilants.

The sibilants

The sibilants are:

The sibilant voiceless affricate:	C c
The sibilant voiced affricate:	Ʒ ʒ
The sibilant voiceless fricative:	S s
The sibilant voiced fricative:	Z z

Very commonly a language has multiple series of sibilants. The most basic is the distinction between hissing (generally dental or alveolar) and hushing (generally postalveolar, alveolopalatal or retroflex) sibilants. This is distinguished by diacritical marks; and in fact, we will encounter those most commonly in this example. The hushing sibilants, when we don't need to distinguish between them more specifically, will be marked with a caron; for example /ʃ/ is to be written as ‹Š š›. Retroflexes, however, are marked with a dot below, as in IAST: ‹Ṣ ṣ›.

Usage of ‹Ʒ ʒ› is consistent with the Americanist system (and orthographies for certain Uralic languages, mainly Sami), but not with IPA! ‹Ʒ ʒ› represents /d͡z/, while /ʒ/ is written as ‹Ž ž›.

Sibilants cannot be sonorants; at most we can have nasalised sibilants, which are transcribed as usually with a tilde. Often, however, a language will complete a series of hushing sibilants with a coronal nasal with similar place of articulation. Sometimes we will have a palatal nasal /ɲ/

with no corresponding palatal plosives; in those cases, the phoneme is to be transcribed along with the sibilants as if it were alveolopalatal /ȵ/. (In fact, in many languages where the "palatal" nasal is traditionally transcribed as /ɲ/ in IPA, it is actually articulated a palatalised coronal nasal.)

The dorsals

The dorsals are:

The dorsal nasal:	Ɔ ŋ
The dorsal voiceless plosive:	K k
The dorsal voiced plosive:	G g
The dorsal voiceless fricative:	X x
The dorsal voiced fricative:	Γ ɣ
The dorsal lateral:	Λ ʎ

The dorsal approximants will be discussed separately.

Dorsals in general, not just dorsal approximants, are commonly labialised or palatalised. Palatalisation of dorsals just shifts the place of articulation from velar to palatal; meanwhile, labialisation provides a secondary articulation. Other than for the palatal and the labiovelar approximant, there are no special letters for those sounds, instead we just deploy the diacritics, so e.g. /kʷ/ is transcribed as ‹Ḵ ḵ›, and /ç/ is transcribed as ‹X́ x́›. The diacritic for labialisation – a stylised W written under the letter as a diacritic – was previously used in IPA, but was replaced with a superscript letter for secondary articulation in 1989.

The gutturals

The gutturals are:

The guttural plosive:	Q q
The guttural voiced fricative:	Ɛ ɛ
The guttural voiceless fricative:	H h

Among the gutturals, we will most commonly encounter the glottals, which by themselves can't be voiced as they're pronounced with the larynx itself. Among pharyngeals, plosives are never voiced, likely due to physiological limitations. It's also ambiguous whether pharyngeals are fricatives or approximants. We, however, also have guttural trills, that can be understood as tenser fricatives.

Pharyngeals are marked with a strikethrough, which also marks pharyngealisation on other sounds. For example, the pharyngeal fricative is written ‹Ħ ħ›.

However, the pharyngeal voiced fricative has no real glottal counterpart, and is thus automatically assumed to be pharyngeal. The "glottal voiced fricative" is more accurately described as murmured ‹Ḥ ḥ›.

The laterals

The laterals are:

The lateral voiceless affricate: ⅄ ƛ
The lateral voiced affricate: ⅃ ɹ
The lateral voiceless fricative: Ш ɯ
The lateral approximant: L l

The laterals are usually approximants, but more constricted articulations are also possible and common in certain language families. Especially in coronal place of articulation, we will encounter fricatives and affricates.

The letter ‹Ł ł› can also be used to represent the lateral voiced fricative, if there's no contrast between the two in a language (e.g. Khalkha). Otherwise, the tensing or laxing diacritic needs to be introduced to differentiate between the two.

Dark L /ɫ/ is a common allophone or in some languages the default realisation of the lateral, especially in languages

with contrastive palatalisation. Unless the distinction is phonemic, velarisation on L isn't indicated.

In addition, there is also a true dorsal lateral ‹Λ ʎ›, whose usage is derived from using the Cyrillic el in Uralic phonetic alphabet for that sound, but the shape has been adapted to look closer to Greek capital lambda, or like cursive Cyrillic, instead. Dorsal lateral affricates are rare and will be instead transcribed as plosives with lateral release: e.g. ‹Ⱪ ⱪ› for [k͡ʟ].

The semivowels

As vowels are also primarily articulated with the dorsum, the dorsal approximants directly correspond to glides of high vowels; we identify them as semivowels. For that reason, the letters for dorsal approximants are designed to behave like the vowel letters, like the sounds they transcribe.

The semivowels are:

The front semivowel: J ȷ
The back semivowel: W w

As with vowels, the back semivowel is generally rounded, and is thus not velar but labiovelar.

If we want to write the labiopalatal and the velar approximant, instead of utilising the diacritics for labialisation or palatalisation for consonants, we use the vowel diacritics for frontening and backening. Thus, /ɥ/ is written as ‹Ẅ ẅ›, and /ɰ/ is written as ‹J̈ ȷ̈› – or, alternatively, as ‹Γ̂ γ̂›.

Alternative method for writing the semivowels is by using the breve on vowel letters to indicate them as vocalic glides; language structure, especially phonotactics and presence of special diphthongs, is to be taken into consideration.

Addendum: the rhotics

The rhotics are:

The coronal approximant:	ꞎ ɻ
The coronal voiceless vibrant:	ꞃ ̥ ɾ̥
The coronal voiced vibrant:	R r
The dorsal voiceless vibrant:	X̂ x̂
The dorsal voiced vibrant:	Γ̂ ɣ̂

Rhotics are generally not a specific type of pronunciation, but those consonants generally have an affinity for each other, and they will commonly stand as allophones to a single rhotic phoneme. Sometimes, the lateral will also be a possible pronunciation (e.g. Japanese). In those cases where there is no generally accepted default pronunciation for the rhotic, it is to be transcribed simply as ‹R r›.

When we need to distinguish between a trill and a tap, we use the breve to indicate the tap as a short variant: /ɾ/ is written as ‹Ř ř›. However, we can also write /r/ as ‹Rr rr›; while first is default, the second is preferred if language employs geminate consonants generally (e.g. Italian, as opposed to Spanish).

The alveolar fricative trill (as seen in Czech /r̝/) is written as a tense rhotic, ‹R̂ r̂›, indicating a tenser constriction that results in frication.

The dorsal vibrants are necessarily uvular; the trilled manner of articulation arises from vibration in the uvula. They're transcribed as tenser counterparts of regular dorsal fricatives; their vibration comes from more intense airflow mechanism.

Addendum: the clicks

The click consonants are a special class of consonants present primarily in languages of southern Africa, and paralinguistically in interjections. While they're traditionally analysed separately and given special symbols, it is possible to consider them as a special kind of coarticulation.

Clicks are obstruents, which are coarticulated with two closures: a dorsal in the back, and another in the front. The front closure is released in a manner that sucks air inwards towards the dorsal closure, which is released afterwards. The airstream mechanism can be described as lingual ingressive. The dorsal closure can be pronounced voicelessly, voicedly, or nasally.

This special manner of coarticulation is directly described in transcription, without implementing special symbols. The front closure is analysed as an implosive that is coarticulated with a dorsal, and the compound sound is transcribed with a ligature composed of both letters.

The possible front articulations of clicks are transcribed as following:

The labial click:	P p
The alveolar click:	T t
The retroflex click:	Ṭ ṭ
The palatal click:	Ť ť
The lateral click:	Ƛ ƛ
The dental click:	C c
The domed click:	Č č

The corresponding IPA symbols are: /ʘ/, /!/, /‼/, /ǂ/, /ǁ/, /ǀ/, /□/.

The vowels

The SSS recognises four degrees of vowel height, but in rare cases where the need arises, the tensing diacritics allow us to define more.

The cardinal vowels

The seven cardinal vowels are:

The front high unrounded vowel:	I ɪ
The front close-mid unrounded vowel:	E e
The front open-mid unrounded vowel:	Ɛ ɛ
The open vowel:	A a
The back open-mid rounded vowel:	Ɔ ɔ
The back close-mid rounded vowel:	O o
The back high rounded vowel:	U u

The front vowels tend to be unrounded, while the back vowels tend to be rounded. In order to define front rounded and back unrounded vowels, we use the frontening and backening diacritics (or, perhaps more intuitively, e-colouring and o-colouring), which can also act on the open vowel to make it specifically front or back. Thus, the front high rounded vowel /y/ is transcribed as ‹Ü ü›, while the back open-mid unrounded vowel /ʌ/ might be transcribed as ‹Ɛ̊ ɛ̊›. An o-coloured A ‹Å å›, canonically /ɑ/, often appears also rounded as /ɒ/, already close to /ɔ/.

‹I ɪ› is dotless because the dot above is used to mark stress.

In cases where languages only distinguish three vowel heights, the letters for close-mid vowels are to be used.

The neutral vowels

The two neutral vowels are:

  The unrounded neutral vowel: Ǝ ə
  The rounded neutral vowel: Ø ø

The neutral vowels are neutral in their manner of articulation, and are pronounced with the default tongue position. They often appear in cases of vowel reduction, or oppositely where ephenthesis generates a non-phonemic vowel.

The anterior vowels

The anterior vowels are:

  The labial vowel: Ω ω
  The coronal vowel: Ƨ ƨ
  The dorsal vowel   Y y

What we call the dorsal vowel is generally the high central vowel – it is unrounded, and neither front or back. Technically, all cardinal vowels, except perhaps for the open back /ɑ/ which approaches the gutturals, are dorsal vowels; their place of articulation is in the back of the mouth, and they're articulated with the tongue. This vowel can be considered a neutral vowel as well, as it is neither truly front nor back, but it is pronounced with the mouth more closed, more as dorsal consonants. Such vowel is relatively commonly encountered, as there's a wider acoustic gap between the front and back high vowels. In Europe, for example, it is present in some Slavic languages as the hard allophone of /i/, from where we adopt the transcription as ‹Y y›.

We sometimes also encounter vowels corresponding to other, non-dorsal approximants. As they're pronounced in front of the mouth, we can call them the anterior vowels.

In many cases those vowels will also be slightly fricated; if we need to distinguish between fricative and non-fricative vowels, we employ the diacritic for tenseness.

The labial vowel is close to the pronunciation of the phoneme usually transcribed as /u/ in Japanese, but which is commonly pronounced with lips unrounded yet compressed, usually transcribed in IPA as [ɯᵝ]. The peculiar acoustics of this sound is explained by the fact that the narrowest constriction is in the labial position, and while the mouth isn't open (which warrants its transcription as a high vowel), the primary place of articulation is actually labial. A similar but more fricated vowel in Nuosu is generally transcribed as /ɣʷ/. In SSS, we transcribe this kind of vowels as ‹Ω ω›.

Similarly, we also encounter the apical vowels, commonly transcribed by sinologists as /ɿ/ /ʅ/ /ʮ/ /ʯ/ (pairs of alveolar and retroflex unrounded and rounded apical vowels). In IPA, those are usually written as [z̩] [ʐ̩] [z̩ʷ] [ʐ̩ʷ]. Again, the apical vowel needs not be fricated, and we encounter such a vowel in English /ɚ/, pronounced as [ɹ]. The aforementioned Nuosu also has the apical vowel /z̩/. While [ɹ] and [z] differ in that the latter is sibilant, this is a distinction not as important with vowels; but again, we can look at it as a kind of a tense-lax distinction. For those vowels, we choose the letter ‹ꝛ ꝛ› – the letter shape is inspired by R rotunda, but modified for aesthetic reasons. As the coronal approximant, this rhotic vowel is automatically understood to be postalveolar; if it's non-rhotic, as in the case of Nuosu /z̩/ (which is also fricative – tense), it is transcribed with the comma below: ‹ꝛ̦ ꝛ̦›.

Vocalic consonants other than approximants, which are mapped to corresponding vowel, are written with a dedicated diacritic, the ring below (as in IAST); e.g. the syllabic coronal nasal is written as ‹N̥ n̥›.

Addendum: correspondence between vowels and their semivowels – glides

Approximants correspond in articulation to high vowels, except that they aren't syllabic. Each of the high (and anterior) vowels has its corresponding glide, a semivocalic counterpart. The pairs are:

The front high unrounded vowel ‹I ɪ› corresponds to the front semivowel (or the palatal approximant) ‹J ȷ›

The back high rounded vowel ‹U u› corresponds to the back semvowel (or the labiovelar approximant) ‹W w›

The labial vowel ‹Ω ɷ› corresponds to the labial approximant ‹V ʋ›

The coronal vowel ‹Ƨ ƨ› corresponds to the coronal approximant ‹Ꝑ ꝑ›

The dorsal vowel ‹Ɣ ɣ› corresponds to the dorsal approximant ‹Γ ɣ›

In case of the labial and the dorsal approximant, the same letter is usually used for the fricative. When both are present in a language, the approximant is marked as lax.

The diacritics

Let us now systematically look through all the diacritical marks and comment on their function. Some of them we have already encountered before; however, some will introduce new possible manners of articulation not yet covered.

The diacritics for place of articulation

Caron distinguishes postalveolars from alveolars (which is the archetypical usage of the diacritic): ‹Š š› [ʃ]; but also uvulars from velars: ‹Ǩ ǩ› [q].

Dot below marks retroflexes: ‹Ṣ ṣ› [ʂ].

Dentals are explicitly marked with a comma below (with an acceptable typographical variant of cedilla): ‹Ș ș› [s̪]. However, labial and coronal fricatives are automatically assumed to be dental.

Palatalisation is marked with the acute: ‹Ɓ ɓ́› [bʲ]. It is meant to abstractly represent "softening" of the consonant.

Velarisation is marked with the grave: ‹B̀ b̀› [bˠ]. It is meant to abstractly represent "hardening" of the consonant.

Labialisation is marked with a stylised W below the letter, as per pre-1989 IPA: ‹K̫ k̫› [kʷ] .

Linguolabials are marked as per IPA, with the seagull below: ‹N̼ n̼› [n̼~m̼].

Lateral release is marked with a circumflex below the letter (a stylised lambda): ‹B̭ b̭› [bˡ].

Doubly-articulated consonants are written with a tie-bar connecting both simultaneous articulations, with the back-articulation writte first: ‹K͡P k͡p› [k͡p].

The diacritics for manner of articulation

Tenseness is marked with the circumflex: ‹Î î› means [i] as opposed to [ɪ]. It has priority to transcribing laxing with inverted breve: ‹ Î î̯›. Tense consonants mean affricates as opposed to plosives (e.g. German /p͡f/ ‹P̂ p̂›), fricatives as opposed to approximants, in gutturals it marks a trilled pronunciation.

Glides are marked with the breve: ‹Ĭ ĭ› [ɪ̯], which is also used for short vowels (in languages that have minor syllables) and taps.

Length is marked by doubling of letter. Where both phonemes must be articulated separately, an interpunct ‹·› is inserted as a separator, understood to indicate an abstract hiatus. This is effectively shorthand for an ultrashort schwa between two consonants ‹ə̆› or an ultrashort glottal fricative (usually with a breathy phonation; [ɦ]) ‹ɦ̆›.

The diacritics for phonation

Besides voiced and voiceless sounds, we also have other modes of phonation.

Aspirated consonants, as well as breathy "voiced-aspirated" consonants typical of Indian languages, are marked with the interpunct, just like the mark for hiatus, as aspiration is effectively an extra pause before voicing of the next consonant starts. Thus: ‹B· b·› [bʱ], ‹P· p·› [pʰ]. In languages where aspiration is very strong, however, those will be analysed as clusters with full /h/, and transcribed as such; example languages are Korean, Icelandic (which also has preaspirated, as well as long stops), and Khmer (where certain infixes actually insert between consonant and /h/, showing that they're actually real consonant clusters).

Voiceless sonorants are marked with the spiritus asper; ‹Ṅ ṅ› [n̥].

Stiff or creaky voice, which means partial glottal closure during voicing or "vocal fry", is transcribed with a tilde below: ‹B̰ b̰› [b̰]. Example is stød in Danish, or the stiff consonant series of Korean.

Pharyngealisation is marked with a strikethrough, preferrably through the stem of the letter: ‹Ƀ ƀ› [bˤ]. Typical example are emphatic consonants of Semitic languages, like Arabic. Retracted tongue root vowels are also understood as pharyngealised; ‹Ʉ ʉ› [ʊ̘].

Nasalisation is marked with the tilde: ‹Ĩ ĩ› [ĩ]. Tilde on a stop consonant means prenasalisation, but weaker than if it were a true nasal+stop cluster.

Ejectives are marked with the comma above after the letter ("closing quotation mark"): ‹P' p'› [p'].

Implosives are marked with the inverted comma above before the letter ("opening quotation mark"): ‹'B 'b› [ɓ].

The diacritics for stress and tones

Stress-accent languages, if they don't have regularly predictable stress, need to mark stressed syllables. Stressed syllables are marked with a dot above the stressed vowel; e.g. ‹ȧ›.

In pitch-accent languages, instead of a simple dot, we employ regular tone diacritics to mark tones on the accented syllable. High tone is marked with an acute; ‹á›, while low tone is marked with a grave; ‹à›. Mid tone, where needed, is marked with a macron; ‹ā›. If more tone heights are needed, we can also use double acutes and graves: ‹a̋›, ‹ȁ›.

In fully tonal languages, every syllable carries a tone, and thus we have a tone mark on every vowel, independent of stress. Diacritics for tones are written below letters, and stress can be separately indicated above, as in stress-accent languages, if present. Simple rising and falling tones can also be indicated by a caron and circumflex below the letter respectively (which are understood as ligatures of successive tone marks). More complex contour tones can also be traced out in similar manner.

Addendum: Ordering

There are two ways in which we can order the letters; we can apply either alphabetic order inherited from alphabetic tradition, or phonological order that obeys principles of articulation.

Alphabetic order

The 45 letters of SSS can be ordered as in regular Latin alphabet, with complementary letters added where they appear in other alphabets from which their shape derives.

Alphabetic order of SSS is as follows:

A	B	C	Γ	D	Δ	E	Ɛ	F
G	Ʒ	H	Ǝ	I	J	Ӿ	K	L
Λ	M	N	Ꝺ	Ш	O	Ɔ	Ɜ	P
Q	R	Ᵽ	S	T	Ʇ	ς	Ꝓ	U
V	W	Φ	X	Y	Z	Þ	Ø	Ω

Rationale for ordering of certain letters:

Letters derived from Greek alphabet are ordered after their Latin counterparts.

Ʒ is ordered based on ordering of S in Cyrillic alphabets with that letter.

Ǝ is ordered based on ordering of Ɛ in Armenian.

Ш is ordered as samekh; not as shin, as shin and samekh "exchange places".

Ɜ is ordered after O, which derives from ayin.

ς and Ꝓ are ordered as Armenian Ո; first the vowel, then the glide, as with already familiar pairs I J and U V (W).

Þ and Ø are ordered as in Norse alphabets.

Ӿ is ordered as djerv, as it looks like it, even though it has a different value.

Ʇ is a turned T and goes after it.

Ω is omega and must be last.

Phonological order

In phonological order, we employ following rules:

Consonants first, vowels second.

Among consonants, in following order: plosives, fricatives, nasals, vibrants, laterals, approximants.

After that by place of articulation, in following order: labials, apicals, sibilants, dorsals, gutturals.

By nuanced place of articulation, from front to back.

By voicing; voiceless first, voiced second.

Cardinal vowels are ordered in an arc; front–open–back, with frontened/backened vowels appearing with their counterparts in regular place of articulation.

After cardinal vowels come neutral vowels and then anterior vowels.

Syllabic consonants at the very end.

Addendum: Contextually-informed transcription

That SSS is not a phonetic, but rather phonemic alphabet, can be best demostrated by its abstract use of diacritics, often leading to the same sound having different transcriptions in different languages.

Consider, for example, the case of Irish. All phonemes (except for /h/) come in pairs: broad and slender. Broad consonants are generally velarised, while slender are palatalised. The transcription system is curiously missing common letters ‹J ɟ› and ‹W w› – despite the phonemes /j~ʝ/ and /w/ without doubt being present in Irish. Instead, they're transcribed within the context of broad-slender system of Irish – as ‹Ǵ ý›, a palatalised dorsal fricative, and ‹V̀ v̀›, a velarised labial fricative.

There's also a significant overlap between vowel height categories. The mid-vowels of Mapuche, for example, transcribed as ‹E e› and ‹O o›, are quite high (and also not strongly front and back) /ë/ and /ö/. In fact, they're closer in pronuciation to English /ɪ/ and /ʊ/, transcribed as ‹I ɪ› and ‹U ʋ›, than the much more open vowels transcribed as ‹E e› and ‹O o›. Similarly, frontened rounded vowels (marked with umlaut) are usually only central; one might be tempted to write them as ‹Ø ø› and ‹Ω ɷ› on a phonological basis (though the latter is generally understood to be of flat rather than rounded labial constriction, akin to /β/), but – especially if they come in pairs with back rounded vowels – unless there's only a single mid central rounded vowel, transcription with umlauts is preferred: ‹Ö ö› and ‹Ü ü›.

There's also the dilemma of using the caron, or the acute, when transcribing alveolopalatals. While the caron is the most general way to transcribe non-retroflex postalveolars (including alveolopalatals), if the sounds are a result of some palatalisation, the acute is instead preferred. But then we also have the case of Lithuanian – where both alveolars and postalveolars can come palatalised! In this case, the series of sibilants are – unmarked ‹S s›, marked with acute ‹Ś ś›, marked with caron ‹Š š›, and marked with caron and acute (which are to stack left-to-right in specifically designed fonts) ‹Ś̌ ś̌›.

A thorough demonstration of how Slovborgian Sound-Spelling works in practice shall be published in a follow-up article.

FAQ

How can I contribute?
You can write an article, a poem, make pictures or submit something else creative.

Where can I submit something?
Current thread, email or discord.

When is the next deadline?
Generally every two-three weeks, depending on teh amount of content. For exact dates see the thread or contact us

Do I choose the pictures for my articles?
You can choose/make them yourself if you wish to, otherwise someone else can decide for you.

Is there a lenght limit?
Generally we try to keep articles between 700-3.000 words. If necessary or justified by interesting form or content, exceptions are possible.

What topics are suitable?
Alle, since any topic is KC-tier with the right approach.

How do I know if my text is good enough?
As a rough measure see the already existing texts. Some are for assburgers, other are less serious. What needs to be present is at least an attempt to bring some structure into your text, since we dont want a zine made out of random thrash.
We are not grammar nazis, runglish, weird stylistic choices and grammar abuse are fine, as long as you reread your text and try to be understandable.

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